introducing 10kg cylinders in its place, for convenience of the public;

(b) whether Indian Oil Corporation have also made arrangements for customers to change dealers and if so, details thereof; and

(c) whether all LPG fittings are being standardised and if so, whether any time bound programme has been chalked out for completion of the work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT) :

(a) IOC has no proposal to introduce 9kg LPG cylinders.

(b) The oil marketing companies including IOC have introduced an experimental scheme in the metropolitan cities enabling LPG consumers to switch over from one distributor to another distributor of their choice (including inter-company transfer). In addition IOC has permitted its customers in selected markets to switch over from one IOC distributor to another.

(c) While LPG cylinder fittings like the pressure regulator and the valve are being standardised for eventually achieving interchangeability among the oil marketing companies, no time bound programme has been drawn up.

New gas reserves in Rajasthan

2543. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that new gas reserves have been located in the State of Rajasthan;

(b) if so, what are the details and the estimated quantity of gas located there; and

(c) by when it is likely to commence commercial exploitation of these resources?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT) : (a) Yes, Sir. Gas was found at Ghotaru prospect in Rajasthan in 1983.

(b) The recoverable reserves of natural gas in Rajasthan are estimated at about 540 million cubic metres.

(c) The prospect at Ghotru is at the exploratory/delineation stage. Production will commence only after the assessment of the potential of the field and availability of suitable consumers.

Dealership granted under social objective scheme

2544. SHRI M. A. BABY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) what is the object of the Social Objective Scheme of the Government for the selection of petroleum product dealers;

(b) how many dealerships for petroleum product have been granted under the 'Social Objective Scheme' in Patna region of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited since the introduction of the scheme; and

(c) whether any one of those dealerships which were granted under the 'Social Objective Scheme' in Patna region of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited in 1986 has been terminated; if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT) : (a) The object of 'Social Objective Scheme' is primarily to give business opportunities to the weaker sections of society viz. Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe communities, Freedom Fighters, Unemployed Graduates, Physically Handicapped persons and Ex-defence Personnel etc.

(b) The total number of HPCL dealerships earmarked under Social Objective Scheme in Bihar State since the introduction of marketing plans in 1980-81 up to 1986-87 are as under :—

Retail Outlets	—	43
SKO/LDO dealerships	—	3
LPG	—	11

(c) One such Retail Outlet dealership has been terminated by HPCL in August, 1986 as the dealer had violated the terms and conditions of the dealership agreement.

Pilferage of LPG from filled cylinders

2545. SHRI SAGAR RAYKA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the Pilferage of LPG from filled cylinders, by the transporters and distributors appointed by the I.O.C.;

(b) if so, what action has been taken by the concerned Oil Companies against the defaulters; and

(c) what further steps Government propose to take to prevent this pilferage and loss to consumers ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) In case a transporter delivers empty or grossly under weight cylinders to the distributor and there is an inference of pilfrage, the cost of the product is debited to him. However, if the pilferage is establish as having been done by the transporter/distributor, action ranging from forefeiture of security deposit to termination of contract/distributorship and blacklisting is taken. Consumers who receive under weight refils are suitably compensated.

Shortage of filed up LPG cylinders

2546. SHRI SAGAR RAYKA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a great shortage of filled up LPG cylinders in the country; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken so far to increase the bottling capacity of the existing L.P.G. bottling plants ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT) : (a) While there is no general shortage of LPG refills in the country, occasional backlogs in supply of LPG refils develop at some locations due to factors such as IR problems, operational and transport bottlenecks product availability constraints etc.

(b) Under the LPG Phase III project, additional capacity of 0.7 million MTPA is being added by setting up of new bottling plants and expansion of existing ones.

Complaint against M/s Kiran Gas Agency, Khan Market, New Delhi

2547. SHRI K. GOPALAN :
SHRI V. GOPALSAMY :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that M/s. Kiran Gas Agency, Khan Market, New Delhi is not prompt on delivering gas to its customers; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor and whether Government propose to keep a watch on this agency and also to take suitable action ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT) : (a) and (b) While operational constraints had led to occasional backlogs,